Webliography: Connections Through Clubs

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**Summary**

In their article, Connections Through Clubs: Collaboration of a Schoolwide Program, Logan and Scarborough describe a program facilitated by a school counselor in setting up, implementing, and evaluating a new program to promote an improved learning environment. The Connections Through Clubs program, led by school faculty and staff, allows students to sign up for an interest “club” (i.e. Scrapbooking, Outdoor Adventures, Knitting, etc.) which serves as a vessel for mentoring. This program was an undertaking by the first author, school counselor Wendy L. Logan.

**Critique**

The Connections Through Clubs program promotes the leadership potential of all school personnel by tapping into their talents and having them share that talent with students. Through these connections with students by a shared interest, school personnel become mentors. Of the personnel surveyed at the implemented school, 25% felt “they focused as much if not more on teaching life and social skills rather than focusing on skills related to the club theme” (Logan & Scarborough, 2008, p. Club Program Implementation, para. 6).

As I read through this article I could not help but picturing this program being implemented at the school where I teach. We currently have something similar called Teacher Advisory Groups (TA) in which all school personnel has a small group of students (about 10 students) and they “teach” about making good choices, etc. However, the teachers hate it! They complain about it all the time and what is worse is many of them like to take the scheduled TA days off. I think the teachers and students would benefit from having a group focused around a similar interest. The desired outcome would not only benefit students but also teachers who would feel empowered by sharing a hobby that is of interest to them.

I found myself agreeing with the goals that were discovered as a result of evaluation; “facilitation of the relationships between peers, the connections between students and school workers and community members, and the engagement of students in a structured school activity” (Logan, W., & Scarborough, 2008, p. Club Program Implementation, para. 7). Also, problems (i.e. club leader absences) that surfaced through the evaluation will give others, who may be thinking of implementing the Connections Through Clubs program, a heads up about what to plan for.

The Connections Through Clubs program originally came about because the involved school was worried about student achievement on standardized tests. Although after three years of having the program, the school has not seen a significant increase in test scores, there has been no talk of abandoning the program. The fringe benefits of the program have been enough to keep everyone on board with its continuance.

**References**

Logan, W., & Scarborough, J. (2008). Connections Through Clubs: Collaboration and Coordination of a Schoolwide Program. *Professional School Counseling*, *12*(2), 157-161. Retrieved from Academic Search Complete database.